

## NINETY PER CENT OF JUVENILE DELINQUENCY CAUSED BY PARENTAL NEGLECT

Fully 90 per cent of delinquent girl cases that come into the juvenile court presided over by Judge Mary M. Bartelme are caused by parental neglect.

Judge Bartelme said she had no hesitancy in placing the figure that high when she was asked by a Day Book reporter to state, as a result of her long experience in the court, how much delinquency should be placed at the door of the parents, as was done by the jury in Portland, Ore., that found Mrs. Wm. Hodge guilty of contributing to the delinquency of her 15-year-old daughter, whom she permitted to run out at night and offered as her defense that she prayed for the girl's safety.

"A mother who only prays for her daughter's safety has a parallel in the story of the Chinese students," Judge Bartelme said. "The superintendent told three of the pupils who lived across the street from the school that she would take them to the 2 o'clock train if they would be on the steps of the school at 15 minutes before 2, just sufficient time to get to the station.

"She was kept busy until a few moments later than she expected. When she hurried out the students were not in sight, so she rushed over to the boarding house and found them in a room. She asked them why they weren't waiting on the steps.

"We saw it was getting late," one said, 'so we came here and prayed we might make the train.'

"Do your praying while you are running for the train," the superintendent told them.

"I feel safe in saying that fully 90 per cent of delinquency of children brought into this court is caused by parental neglect. Of course, we are unable to go back to the parents to their parents and ascertain the cause of parental laxness, but there is no doubt of the lack of parental care.

"Children are not taught the sacredness of home life. They look for everything they want outside of the home. They are out on the streets at night instead of in the home. A mother will say:

"I told my girl she could only go to the first show." The girl is quite as likely to meet her temptation at the first show as at the second.

"Girls have no home responsibilities. At one time the daughters of the house cleaned the lamps and washed down the stairs. Today children go outside of the home to work—in factories and stores—and home becomes only a place to sleep in at night.

"The girl should be given some task, however light, and told it is her task and she will be depended upon to perform it always. It will give her a feeling that she is needed. None of us are very much good in a place where we do not feel we are needed.

"There is too much self-gratification permitted children. Their principal attitude seems to be that what they want they must have. There is a false standard of living that mothers permit and even encourage in their children. The girl must have silk stockings; she cannot wear a hat that costs less than \$5; she must have high boots since they are the fashion, though they may cost \$6 a pair.

"We are living on bubbles. The parents live at a hysterical pace and the children are given the same liberty. I sometimes grow cold as I listen to the stories of night life that girls tell who are mere children, and I expect the mother at any moment to rush forward and clasp the girl in her arms to protect her, but the mothers listen as though the girls were not their flesh and blood, or the stories appalling ones.

"Parental neglect is the cause of an enormous amount of delinquency among children and the parents are, therefore, responsible for that delinquency."